

Message Text

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62

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SEC-01 JUSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SCA-01 (ISO) W
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R 182050Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0534

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2509

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PGOV CS

SUBJECT: "LA HORA" ATTACKS AMBASSADOR AND SEC

REF: -. STATE 120119

B. SAN JOSE 2064

C. SAN JOSE 2480

1. THE VESCO-FINANCED AND FIGUERES-ORIENTED AFTERNOON DAILY "LA HORA" ATTACKED AMBASSADOR TODMAN ON JUNE 17 IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED, "DID MR. TODMAN COME TO TAKE VESCO?" ON THE PAGE FACING THE EDITORIAL, "LA HORA" REPRINTED THE EDITORIAL BITTERLY ATTACKING SEC WHICH AS PUBLISHED IN "EXCELSIOR" ON MAY 20 AND REPORTED BY REFTEL B.

2. THE LA HORA EDITORIAL REHEARSED SOME OF THE PREVIOUS ALLEGATIONS THAT HAVE APPEARED IN BOTH EXCELSIOR AND LA HORA REGARDING ITS VIEW OF THE U.S. INTEREST IN SECURING ROBERT VESCO'S EXTRADITION. IT NOTED THAT STANTON D. ANDERSON HAD BEEN "EXHAUSTIVELY INVESTIGATED" BY POLITICAL OPPONENTS OF FORMER-PRESIDENT NIXON IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE WHITE HOUSE WAS FORCED TO WITHDRAW ANDERSON'S NOMINATION. THE EDITORIAL THEN WENT ON TO OBSERVE THAT AMBASSADOR TODMAN DID NOT EVEN HAVE TO APPEAR BEFORE A SENATE COMMITTEE FOR HIS
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CONFIRMATION, A FACT THE EDITORIAL SUGGESTS

INDICATES THE AMBASSADOR HAD THE BACKING OF NIXON'S POLITICAL OPPOSITION. THE EDITORIAL ASKS IF THE AMBASSADOR WAS CHOSEN TO COME TO COSTA RICA TO GET VESCO BY MEANS OF PRESSURING THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO REFORM THE EXTRADITION LAW.

3. IN ANOTHER PARAGRAPH THE EDITORIAL STATES THAT IF THE U.S. REALLY HAS THE PROOFS AGAINST VESCO, THE CURRENT LAW WILL NOT BE ABLE TO IMPEDE HIS EXTRADITION. HOWEVER, THE EDITORIAL GOES ON, AS SEEN BY THE FAILURE OF THE CASES AGAINST VESCO IN THE BAHAMAS AND COSTA RICA, THE EMBASSY WANTS TO FORCE A REFORM OF THE LAW WHICH WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO EXECUTE THE EXTRADITION, AFTER NOTING THAT THE VESCO CASE IS ONE OF PURELY INTERNAL U.S. POLITICS, THE EDITORIAL NOTES THAT "IT'S INCREDIBLE THAT ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COSTA RICAN PEOPLE IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY LEND THEMSELVES CONSCIOUSLY OR UNCONSCIOUSLY TO THE GAME OF THE FRANKLY INTERVENTIONIST NORTHAMERICAN POLITICIANS."

4. THE EDITORIAL ALSO NAMES DEPUTY RODOLFO PIZA ESCALANTE AS THE LEADER BEHIND THE MOVE TO CHANGE THE EXTRADITION LAW AND MENTIONS HIS VISIT LAST YEAR TO THE U.S. AND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE. IN THE EDITORIAL'S FINAL PARAGRAPH IT REJECTS ALL KINDS OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND END UP, "BECAUSE WE RESIST ACCEPTING THAT MR. TODMAN IS NOTHING MORE THAN THE INCARNATION OF INTERVENTION IS THE REASON WE HAVE HIT THIS THEME WITH SUCH FRANKNESS."

5. IN REPLY TO THE ATTACK ON THE SEC, THE EMBASSY RELEASED A PRESS STATEMENT ON JUNE 17 DRAWING FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED IN REFTEL A (TEXT BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT). OUR FLAT AND OBJECTIVE STATEMENT WAS PRINTED IN TWO OF THE THREE MORNING PAPERS ON JUNE 18. EXCELSIOR WHILE PRINTING CONFIDENTIAL

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OUR RELEASE ON AN INSIDE PAGE--AFTER A SHORT FRONT PAGE LEAD--USED ITS ENTIRE BACK PAGE TO REPRINT IT MAY 20 EDITORIAL ATTACKING THE SEC.

6. COMMENT: THE LA HORA EDITORIAL APPEARS TO REFLECT SERIOUS CONCERN AMONG THE VESCO FORCES OVER THE CHANCES OF AN IMMINENT REFORM OF THE EXTRADITION LAW. WHILE WE HAVE SOME RELIABLE

INDICATIONS (REFTEL C) THAT SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT
MAY SHORTLY OCCUR, THESE ATTACKS SEEM TO INDICATE
THAT MOVEMENT MAY BE SOONER THAN EXPECTED AND
WITH CHANCE OF SUCCESS IN REFORMING THE LAW.
TODMAN

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NNN

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